

What is claimed is:

1. A method for electronically initiating a purchase of an item using a computer, the method comprising the steps of:

5 establishing a communication between a processor and a removable electronic storage medium having at least one image of at least one item stored thereon;

accessing an image of an item from the storage medium;

10 viewing the accessed item image on a display in communication with the processor;

if desired, electronically selecting the item for purchase, an item selection automatically causing purchase data on the item to be stored on a writable memory device in communication with the processor.

15 2. The method recited in Claim 1, wherein:

at least one image comprises a three-dimensional image; and

the viewing step comprises rotating the image in at least one dimension from a first aspect to a second aspect.

20 3. The method recited in Claim 1, wherein the at least one image comprises two sets of images, a first set comprising an image of an object and a second set comprising an image of a saleable item related to the object.

4. The method recited in Claim 1, wherein the storage medium is selected from a group consisting of a read-only memory disk and a read-write disk.

5. The method recited in Claim 1, wherein the item image further comprises an electronic switch means activatable with an input device in communication with the processor for enabling the selection step.

6. The method recited in Claim 5, wherein:
the electronic switch means comprises a defined region on the display; and
the electronic selection step comprises using input means for pointing at and selecting the button.

7. The method recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
following the electronic selection step, accessing the writable memory device;
viewing the purchase data; and
outputting the purchase data to a vendor to complete the purchase.

8. The method recited in Claim 7, wherein the purchase data outputting step comprises submitting the purchase data to the vendor in at least one of an electronic form, a hard-copy form, or via a personal communication device.

9. The method recited in Claim 1, further comprising the step, following the electronic selection step, of viewing the purchase data formatted as an order form.

10. The method recited in Claim 9, further comprising the step, following the purchase data viewing step, of revising an item of the purchase data to update the purchase data.

11. The method recited in Claim 1, further comprising the step, following the communication establishing step, of offering a plurality of choices of material for display, including a virtual-reality tour of a site, a set of still images, and promotional information.

12. A method for assisting a buyer to make a purchase from items having images thereof stored on an electronic storage medium, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a software application on the storage medium, the software adapted to:

run on a computer comprising a processor and a storage device, an input device, and a display device in electronic communication with the processor;

display a menu on the display device comprising identifiers of the images;

receive a selection by a user through the input device of an identifier;

and

write a file on the storage device comprising the selected identifier;

and

interfacing the storage medium with the processor.

5 **13.** The method recited in Claim 12, wherein the software is further adapted to retrieve the identifier from the storage device and display the identifier on the display device.

10 **14.** The method recited in Claim 12, further comprising the step of accessing the storage medium through the processor and initializing the software application.

15 **15.** A system for electronically initiating a purchase of an item using a computer, the system comprising:

 a removable electronic storage medium having at least one image of at least one item and a software application stored thereon;

 a processor;

 a storage device, means for reading data from the storage medium, an input device, and a display device, all in electronic communication with the processor;

 wherein the software application is adapted to:

20 run on the processor;

 display a menu on the display device comprising identifiers of the images;

receive a selection of an identifier by a user through the input device;

and

write a file on the storage device comprising the selected identifier;

access an image of an item from the storage medium;

5 display the accessed item image on the display device;

receive a user selection of the item for purchase; and

automatically store purchase data on the item on a writable memory
device in communication with the processor.

10 **16.** The system recited in Claim 15, further comprising means for establishing
communication between the processor and an external network, the network having means
for accessing a vendor of the item.

15 **17.** The system recited in Claim 16, wherein the software application further is
adapted to transfer the purchase data to the vendor via the network.

18. The system recited in Claim 15, further comprising means for outputting a
hard copy of the purchase data.

20 **19.** A software application resident on a storage medium also containing digital
representations of a plurality of visual images and purchasing data for items associated
with at least some of the images, the software application comprising:

means for interfacing with a processor;

means for displaying visual images of at least some of the items on a display device in communication with the processor;

means for receiving a selection of an item from a user through an input device in electronic communication with the processor; and

means for writing a file on a storage device in electronic communication with the processor comprising the selected item and associated purchasing data.

20. The software application recited in Claim 19, further comprising means for displaying a shopping cart comprising an item identifier and purchasing data associated therewith along with the visual images.

21. The software application recited in Claim 20, further comprising means for displaying on the display device a complete order form comprising contents of the shopping cart.

22. The software application recited in Claim 21, further comprising means for outputting the order form in at least one of an electronic form or a hard-copy form.

23. The software application recited in Claim 19, further comprising means for displaying a menu of subsets of visual images and means for receiving a user selection of

a subset from the input device, the user selection directing a display of the subset of images.

5 **24.** The software application recited in Claim 19, further comprising means for transferring a second software application to the storage device for permitting a subsequent access of the file from the storage device without the storage medium and the processor being in communication.

10 **25.** The software application recited in Claim 19, wherein the visual image displaying means further comprises means for displaying at least one image in

15 **26.** A storage medium comprising:
 a plurality of visual images stored in digital form thereon and purchase data associated with at least some of the images; and

 a software application comprising:
 means for running on a processor;
 means for displaying a menu on a display device in communication with the processor comprising identifiers of at least some of the images on the storage medium;

20 means for receiving a selection of an identifier by a user through an input device in electronic communication with the processor; and

means for writing a file on a storage device in electronic communication with the processor comprising the selected identifier.

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